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[Approved February 6, 2006]

Academic Policies

January 23, 2006

Senators Present: J. Biddle, B. Conniff, D. Gudaitis, P. Meyers, M. Morton, R. Penno, A. Seielstad, S. Singer, R. Wells

Invited Contributors: Deb Bickford, Mark Patterson

AGENDA

1. Review of APC work Fall 2005

ECAS reviewed the APC report for the Fall 2005. (1) The Committee completed work on the QRC, Module 3. The Senate approved changes in this requirement at the December 2005 meeting (DOC-05-03). (2) The Committee recommended that deans set the policies and procedures for graduate courses for their respective units for the 2006 Stander Symposium. The Committee recommends that, before the 2007 Stander Symposium, the planning group investigate moving the date of the Symposium towards the end of April and making the graduate alternative learning experience more explicit. Senator Biers will forward this recommendation to Amber Rose for the Stander Symposium planning group. (3) The Committee recommends delaying final decision about implementing further evaluation of Thematic Clusters until October 15, 2006 because of the on-going work of several groups that are studying various aspects of General Education. Most of those groups will report their findings by this date. The nature of those findings should inform APC's decision about what, if any, further evaluation of Thematic Clusters is needed.

2. Agenda items carried over for Winter 2006

The APC will review UD's course Withdrawal Policy. The APC will receive input from those charged with implementing the policy and will consider the clause that allows for withdrawal because of "change in career objectives" as well as the deadline for withdrawal.

3. APC's role in leading/initiating academic policies.

A wide-ranging and helpful discussion explored APC responsibilities and opportunities. One process for setting our agenda focuses upon relationships with standing committees or ad hoc committees answering to the APC (e.g., General Education, calendar and Stander). APC could meet with a representative of these groups once or twice a year to both review progress and preview new issues. Another process involves encouraging problem-setting rather than problem-solving. That is, APC could try to encourage/solicit "ideas" about UD's academic life in addition to dealing with "concerns" about particular issues. Whether using the above processes or combining them with other responsibilities, the APC would seem to be a place to try to identify the variety of perspectives/players/components of some of the complex issues facing UD (e.g., common meeting times, class schedules, rooms).

A rich post-meeting discussion generated a possible third agenda item for our next meeting. At one level, this discussion "wondered about" how UD's academic leaders could create an on-going academic agenda (the important stuff) that is occasionally interrupted by the urgent stuff

(e.g., the QRC Module 3 issue this Fall). Could APC somehow facilitate a problem-posing forum where powerful questions are raised for future discourse over the next two-three years? Could we encourage the rich exploration of ideas as the prelude to problem-setting and a precondition for problem-solving? My brief attempt to capture the discussion is lame and inadequate—I'll try to find a way to introduce it better on the 6th.

4. Agenda for February 6th meeting

There will be two action items and one discussion item. (1) Biddle will disseminate data about the withdrawal policy early next week. Our goal will be to make a recommendation on the 6th. (2) We will formalize our process for recommending agenda items to ECAS. And (3) we will discuss ways to encourage a broader academic agenda setting process for UD.

Respectfully submitted,

J. R. Biddle